

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated November 20, 2007 ("*Office Action*"). At the time of the *Office Action*, Claims 1-44 were pending. The Examiner rejects Claims 1-15, 17-31, and 33-44, and objects to Claims 16 and 32. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that Claims 16 and 32 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants amend Claims 1, 17, 33, and 44 and cancel Claims 16 and 32 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that Claims 16 and 32 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. To hasten issuance of currently allowable subject matter, Applicants amend all independent claims (Claims 1, 17, 33, and 44) to incorporate allowable subject matter. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indications.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

The Examiner submits the following rejections:

- Claims 1, 4, 7, 11, 17, 20, 23, 27, 33, and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,965,572 issued to Boodaghians ("*Boodaghians*");
- Claims 2, 12, 18, 28, 34, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Boodaghians* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,477,531 issued to McKee et al. ("*McKee*");
- Claims 3, 5, 19, 21, 35, 37, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Boodaghians* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,002,671 issued to Kahkoska et al. ("*Kahkoska*");
- Claims 8, 9, 24, 25, 40, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Boodaghians* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,741,555 issued to Li et al. ("*Li*");

- Claims 10, 26, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Boodaghians* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,215,774 issued to Knauerhase (“*Knauerhase*”); and
- Claims 13-15 and 29-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over *Boodaghians* in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0056503 issued to Hibbard (“*Hibbard*”).

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, but to hasten issuance of currently allowable subject matter, Applicants amend all independent claims (Claims 1, 17, 33, and 44) to incorporate allowable subject matter. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner’s indications.

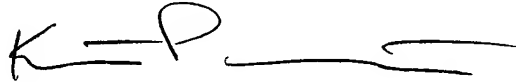
CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place the Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of this Application. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of the Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicants stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Although no fees are believed to be currently due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.
Attorneys for Applicants

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K-P' followed by a long horizontal stroke and a small upward flick at the end.

Kurt M. Pankratz
Reg. No. 46,977
(214) 953-6584

Date: January 21, 2008

Customer Number: **05073**